Lapse on the part of certain Railway staff

4761. DR. K. MALAISAMY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether during February, 2005, Railway tickets for the Suburban Trains issued to the commuters at the Railway Ticket Issue Counter at Tambaram Railway Station, Southern Railway, Chennai were found to be earlier dated, on checking by the squad (due to the concerned Railway person's failure to correctly punch the date of issue of the tickets) and the commuters were penalized for no fault of theirs; and

(b) whether this kind of lapses were noticed elsewhere, and if so, the corrective measures envisaged to put an end to this sytem failure or human failure?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) It was an isolated case of human failure of improper setting of dating machine. The concerned booking clerk has been suitably taken up. Such incident has not been noticed at any other place. The penalty of Rs. 256 charged from the concerned passenger has already been refunded.

Occupation of reserved compartments by army personnel

4762. SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI:
SHRI NAND KISHORE YADAV:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a number of instances have been reported about Army Jawans and policemen with unreserved tickets entering into reserved compartments and taking away the seats of the passengers whose seats are reserved;

(b) if so, whether such instances have come to the notice of Railways;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether efforts have been made to ensure that no person is allowed to enter the reserved compartments in express and mails;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) Cases of unauthorised passengers including policemen

& Army Jawans entering into reserved coaches with unreserved tickets and occupying the reserved seats/berths of bonafide passengers do come to notice. However, separate details relating to unauthorised entry of policemen or army jawans are not maintained.

(d) to (f) It is the constant endeavour of the Railways to ensure comfortable journey of the reserved passengers. As such, apart from manning of reserved coaches, special & surprise checks are conducted against ticketless/ irregular travel and persons detected travelling unauthorisedly are dealt with as per relevant provisions of the law. In addition the minimum penalty has also been enhanced from Rs. 50/- to Rs. 250/- with effect from 1.7.2004 in order to discourage entering of unauthorized passengers in reserved coaches.

Banning of licensed porters

4763. DR. M.A.M. RAMASWAMY : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have taken a decision to ban licensed porters of Railways to handle parcels;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the total number of licensed porters in the country;

(d) whether this decision is likely to have an adverse effect on the livelihood of these porters; and

(e) if so, the steps taken by Government to protect the interests of these licensed porters?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (e) The licensed porters are given licenses for carrying passengers' luggage for which they get porterage charges directly from the passengers, which are revised from time to time. Though they were allowed to be utilised for parcel handling work for short periods only, their main livelihood continues to be carrying passengers' luggage. On most of the Zonal Railways, licensed porters are satisfactorily carrying on their job except on a few Railways where some Court Cases are involved. There are approximately 37700 licensed porters on Indian Railways.